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Career-1(P53566US00)

U.S. APPLICATION NO. (If known, see 37 CFR 1.5)

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INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION NO.
PCT/NL00/00419INTERNATIONAL FILING DATE
15 June 2000

PRIORITY DATE CLAIMED

TITLE OF INVENTION

METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR SUPPORTING AN APPLICATION PROCEDURE

APPLICANT(S) FOR DO/EO/US

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Applicant herewith submits to the United States Designated/Elected Office (DO/EO/US) the following items and other information:

1. ☒ This is a **FIRST** submission of items concerning a filing under 35 U.S.C. 371.
2. ☐ This is a **SECOND** or **SUBSEQUENT** submission of items concerning a filing under 35 U.S.C. 371.
3. ☐ This is an express request to begin national examination procedures (35 U.S.C. 371(f)). The submission must include items (5), (6), (9) and (21) indicated below.
4. ☐ The US has been elected by the expiration of 19 months from the priority date (Article 31).
5. ☐ A copy of the International Application as filed (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(2))
 - a. ☐ is attached hereto (required only if not communicated by the International Bureau).
 - b. ☐ has been communicated by the International Bureau.
 - c. ☐ is not required, as the application was filed in the United States Receiving Office (RO/US).
6. ☐ An English language translation of the International Application as filed (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(2)).
 - a. ☐ is attached hereto.
 - b. ☐ has been previously submitted under 35 U.S.C. 154(d)(4).
7. ☐ Amendments to the claims of the International Application under PCT Article 19 (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(3))
 - a. ☐ are attached hereto (required only if not communicated by the International Bureau).
 - b. ☐ have been communicated by the International Bureau.
 - c. ☐ have not been made; however, the time limit for making such amendments has NOT expired.
 - d. ☐ have not been made and will not be made.
8. ☐ An English language translation of the amendments to the claims under PCT Article 19 (35 U.S.C. 371 (c)(3)).
9. ☐ An oath or declaration of the inventor(s) (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(4)).
10. ☐ An English language translation of the annexes of the International Preliminary Examination Report under PCT Article 36 (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(5)).

Items 11 to 20 below concern document(s) or information included:

11. ☐ An Information Disclosure Statement under 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98.
12. ☐ An assignment document for recording. A separate cover sheet in compliance with 37 CFR 3.28 and 3.31 is included.
13. ☒ A **FIRST** preliminary amendment. (with substitute/clean claims)
14. ☐ A **SECOND** or **SUBSEQUENT** preliminary amendment.
15. ☐ A substitute specification.
16. ☐ A change of power of attorney and/or address letter.
17. ☐ A computer-readable form of the sequence listing in accordance with PCT Rule 13ter.2 and 35 U.S.C. 1.821 - 1.825.
18. ☐ A second copy of the published international application under 35 U.S.C. 154(d)(4).
19. ☐ A second copy of the English language translation of the international application under 35 U.S.C. 154(d)(4).
20. ☒ Other items or information: postcard receipt, Cover Letter (1 pps.), Application Data Sheet (1 pp.), copy of International Publication No. WO 01/97065 A2 (including three (3) sheets of drawings - FIGs. 1-3), copy of Declaration of Non-Establishment of International Search Report (2 pps.).

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(CAREER1TRANS/102:ca)

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Inventors: SWINKELS, Harald Gerard;
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Title: METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR SUPPORTING AN APPLICATION
PROCEDURE

COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
BOX PCT
Washington, D. C. 20231

S I R:

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Please amend the above-identified patent
application which is simultaneously filed herewith, as
follows:

IN THE CLAIMS-

To facilitate entry of the following changes, the Applicants
have also submitted herewith substitute pages providing all
the pending claims, as they now stand and in "clean form",
incorporating the changes indicated below.

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Amend the following claims:

1 --3. (amended) An apparatus according to claim 1[or 2],
2 wherein the apparatus prior to the selection of a company,
3 presents a company selection test to the user, in which the
4 apparatus compares wishes and requirements in respect of a
5 career as received from the user with company profiles of a
6 number of companies and determines which of the company
7 profiles fits the wishes and requirements of the user best.

1 4. (amended) An apparatus according to [any one of the
2 preceding claims] claim 1, wherein the apparatus can receive
3 per company a first set of weighting factors per
4 career-oriented question and can have same included in
5 weighting when determining whether the user fits in with any
6 one of the careers associated with the company.

1 6. (amended) An apparatus according to claim 3[or 5],
2 wherein each company selection test comprises several items
3 and the apparatus can receive per company a third set of
4 weighting factors per item of the company selection test and
5 can have same included in weighting when determining which
6 of the company profiles fits the wishes and requirements of
7 the user best.

1 7. (amended) An apparatus according to [any one of the
2 preceding claims] claim 1, wherein the apparatus is arranged
3 for showing to the user, prior to the presentation of the
4 career-oriented questions, a representation of a central
5 hall of an office building with hyperlinks to websites of
6 the predetermined companies. --.

REMARKS

The foregoing amendment is made to delete multiple dependent claims.

Respectfully submitted,

12 February 2002



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Peter L. MICHAELSON

Name of person making certification

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JC13 Rec'd PCT/PTO 13 FEB 2002

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Title: Method and apparatus for supporting an application procedure.

The present invention relates to a method and an apparatus for supporting a job interview. The apparatus can be a stand-alone system, but may also be a computer device which can be accessed, for instance, via the Internet.

5 Hereinbelow, first a few of such known apparatuses will be briefly discussed.

10 In WO 98/39716, "System and method for coordinating potential employers and candidates for employment", required qualifications for a position within an enterprise or for a *specific function* are matched with qualification(s) a job seeker has to offer. The system tests if *at least one* qualification of the job seeker corresponds with at least one required qualification which the employer (the enterprise) requires from the job seeker for a specific function/position. Thus, through an interface, it is tested if a job seeker who logs in on the system is suitable, with his
15 qualification(s), for a particular job/function/position. The object of the system is to save time and costs for the enterprise which offers particular functions and positions. The system only supplies job seekers who meet at least one required qualification for the position in question.

20 In WO 00/02178, "Computer-aided learning methods and apparatus for a job", on the basis of a person's particular function/job/position, it is established through the system which tasks and jobs belong to this function/job/position. The system supplies learning material which is useful, or necessary, to perform a specific position/job/function adequately. Learning material that is suggested by the system for performing a
25 particular position/job/function within an enterprise is moreover suggested by the system in order of priority.

In WO 99/54835, "Method and system for selecting candidates for employment", a system is described for finding suitable candidates for

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vacancies through a communication network such as Internet. The system has been developed from the *employers' side and not from the applicants' side*. It is the employers who can find suitable candidates for vacancies through the system. An employer can log in on the system directly, or
5 through an agent, to find suitable candidates for vacancies.

In US-A-5,978,768, "Computerized job search system and method for posting and searching job openings via a computer network", a system is described with which employers can post *vacancies* on a computer network such as Internet. Through the system, direct feedback is given on any
10 suitable candidates for vacancies which have been posted by the enterprise. This is the system with which most Jobsites work nowadays. That is, the system matches required qualifications and capacities for vacancies with the qualifications of job seekers who have logged in on the system.

WO 99/17242, "On-line recruiting system with improved candidate and
15 position profiling", describes a recruitment system that matches profiles of candidates with predefined characteristics/qualifications for a particular position. There is described a database from which job profiles are matched with the wishes a job seeker has in respect of a prospective job/position. Everything happens online here. This, too, is a Jobsite idea.

20 The object of the invention is to provide a method and an apparatus which help an applicant in entering an application with a company, a company section or a particular business discipline (such as marketing, financial, legal, etc.), not so much at the level of existing vacancies but at the level of careers.

25 To that end, the invention primarily provides an apparatus for supporting an application with a company, comprising at least one processor, at least one memory, input means for inputting information by a user and display means for showing information to the user, the apparatus being arranged for performing the following steps:

- 30 • having the user select a company from a list of predetermined

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companies;

- selecting a predetermined number of questions from a list of career-oriented questions especially developed for that company;
- presenting the selected career-oriented questions to the user;
- 5 • receiving answers of the user to the career-oriented questions;
- determining whether the user fits in with a career associated with the company, and
 - ♦ if so, sending personal data of the user to the company, provided the user has given permission to do so;
 - 10 ♦ if not, reporting to the user that he/she does not fit in with a career associated with that company.

'Career-oriented questions' are here understood to mean those questions that reflect qualifications and/or knowledge and/or values and/or skills and/or competences desired by a company, company section or
15 business discipline.

Choosing a company from a list can be done with the aid of a randomizer.

The differences between the concept of the invention and the existing concepts briefly discussed above result from the fact that in the concept
20 according to the invention the starting point is exclusively the (starting) applicant, instead of the employing enterprise. In the existing concepts discussed, the starting point is the company, which is looking for someone to fill a particular vacancy, or, for instance, a job agency which is looking for a candidate matching a particular job description. In all cases, a candidate
25 first gives away personal information and then the intermediary proceeds to look for a suitable job with a company or sees if the candidate is suitable for an existing vacancy.

The invention further relates to a method for supporting an application with a company via an apparatus comprising at least one processor, at least
30 one memory, input means for inputting information by a user and display

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means for showing information to the user, the method comprising the following steps:

- having the user select a company from a list of predetermined companies;
- 5 • selecting a predetermined number of questions from a list of career-oriented questions especially developed for that company;
- presenting the selected career-oriented questions to the user;
- receiving answers of the user to the career-oriented questions;
- determining whether the user fits in with a career associated with the company, and
- 10 ♦ if so, sending personal data of the user to the company, provided the user has given permission to do so;
- ♦ if not, reporting to the user that he/she does not fit in with a career associated with that company.

15 The invention also relates to a computer program product for supporting an application with a company and which can be read by a computer device comprising at least one processor, at least one memory, input means for inputting information by a user and display means for showing information to the user, the apparatus being arranged for

20 performing the following steps after the computer program product has been read:

- having the user select a company from a list of predetermined companies;
- selecting a predetermined number of questions from a list of
- 25 career-oriented questions especially developed for that company;
- presenting the selected career-oriented questions to the user;
- receiving answers of the user to the career-oriented questions;
- determining whether the user fits in with a career associated with the company, and
- 30 ♦ if so, sending personal data of the user to the company, provided the

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user has given permission to do so;

- ♦ if not, reporting to the user that he/she does not fit in with a career associated with that company.

Finally, the invention also relates to a data carrier provided with such
5 a computer program product.

The invention will be further elucidated hereinbelow with reference to a few figures which are intended only by way of illustration and not to limit the scope of the invention.

Fig. 1 gives an overview of a computer system with which the
10 invention can be carried out.

Fig. 2 shows a schematic flow diagram of the method according to the present invention.

Fig. 3 shows different levels that are used in matching.

In Fig. 1, three computer devices 2, 4, 6 are shown. They are connected
15 with each other via a telecommunication network 27, for instance the Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN), the Internet, a glass fiber network, etc.

The computer device 2 is shown in detail, but it is pointed out that the two other computer devices can be built up in the same or a similar manner.
20 The computer device 2 has a processor 1 for performing arithmetic operations. The processor 1 is connected with a number of memory components, among which a hard disk 5, Read Only Memory (ROM) 7, Electrically Erasable Programmable Read Only Memory (EEPROM) 9 and Random Access Memory (RAM) 11. Not all of these memory types need to be
25 necessarily present. Moreover, they do not need to be arranged physically close to the processor 1. They can also be arranged remotely therefrom.

The processor 1 is also connected with means for inputting instructions, data, etc., by a user, such as a keyboard 13 and a mouse 15. Other inputting means, such as a touch screen, a track ball and/or speech
30 converter, which are known to those skilled in the art, can also be applied.

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There is provided a reading unit 17, connected with the processor 1. The reader 17 is arranged to read data from and optionally store data on a data carrier, such as a floppy disk 19 or a CD-ROM 21. Other data carriers can be, for instance, DVDs, as is known to those skilled in the art.

5 The processor 1 is also connected with a printer 23 for printing output data on paper, as well as a display unit 3, for instance a monitor or LCD (Liquid Crystal Display) screen, or any other type of display unit known to those skilled in the art, such as the display of a cellular telephone or a display of a palmtop.

10 The processor 1 is connected with the communication network 27 by means of input/output means 25. The processor 1 is arranged to communicate with the other communication devices 4, 6 via the network 27.

The processor 1 can be implemented as a stand-alone system or as a number of parallel operating processors, which are each arranged to execute
15 subtasks of a greater program, or as one or more main processors with various subprocessors. Parts of the functionality of the invention can even, if desired, be carried out by remote processors which communicate with processor 1 via network 27.

The computer devices 4, 6 are represented only very schematically. Of
20 them, there are only shown: keyboards 31, 39, displays 33, 41, mouse 35, 43 and the cases 29, 37 with processors and memories (not shown).

It is noted that the invention can be applied in a system shown in Fig. 1, but that it may equally well be carried out on a stand-alone device. In the embodiment, the computer device 4 is a server on which runs
25 supporting software, if any, or from where the necessary software can be downloaded. Further, the computer device 2 is arranged, for instance locally, at a user, for instance at home, and the computer device 6 is arranged at a company whose career profiles are stored in the software according to the invention. The software according to the invention can find
30 its way to the user via the Internet or via a data carrier, for instance

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CD-ROM or DVD. The user can then run the software, for instance, directly from the data carrier or after it has been read into the memory of his own computer device. Alternatively, the user can log in on a program which, for instance, runs centrally on computer device 4, and from his house use the functionality thereof remotely.

General information regarding the animation technology

In the description which presently follows, regularly reference is made to current software which can be used in the implementation. It is evident that (in the future) other software with other names can be used, which, in principle, possesses the same or similar functionality.

All Quicktime contains Quicktime layers, sprite animation and hotspot links which tell director which frame is being asked.

The number used hereinbelow refer to the numbers placed against the blocks of the block diagram.

1a Intro animation

A user is given, for instance, a CD-ROM 21, containing the necessary software and databases for use on his computer device 2. When the user inserts the CD-ROM 21 into his computer, he can download the software present thereon on his computer device 2 and then run the software. Alternatively, he can run directly from the CD-ROM 21. Once he has started, an intro animation starts, which is intended as a piece of entertainment and to indicate that the software according to the invention is really different and less static than existing job application programs.

The user is shot through a virtual tunnel, which he sees via his display 3 and in which logos of participating companies shoot by. Tension is slowly built up, for instance with increasingly faster house music, which is played via loudspeaker boxes (not shown). Eventually, the user sees a Central Hall on his screen 3. This is accompanied, for instance, with the sound of

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breaking glass.

Technique used: what is involved is a Quicktime animation with Sorenson compression, embedded in Director.

5 *1b Skip intro animation*

If the user does not wish to watch the intro animation, there is the option of skipping it by clicking on "skip intro", a button especially serving that purpose, which is shown on his computer screen 3.

Technique used: Director.

10

2 Central hall

The Central Hall which is shown to the user on his screen 3 is the basis, the 'navigation center' of the software. From the Central Hall, the user can leisurely look at the possibilities offered by the software. The user can walk around in the Central Hall by means of mouse movements and mouse clicks. What is involved here is a 3D animation of a hall in a large corporate building. Commercial banners of participating companies can be viewed, which in some cases will contain a hyperlink to websites or 'rooms in the building' of the companies in question.

20

- The Central Hall, as a navigation point, offers five options to the user:
1. applying directly with all participating companies, which means that the user arrives directly in a room of the company of his choice (blocks 4a-...);
 2. surfing to the website of the server 4, indicated with block 5, accessible in e.g. the Netherlands via "<http://www.CareerFever.NL>";
 3. starting a company selection test (blocks 6a-6g);
 4. 'Taking the elevator' which brings the user to a 'floor' where companies from a particular branch are represented (blocks 7a-7k);
 5. Quit CD-ROM (blocks 3a-3c).

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Technique used: Quicktime VR navigation with sprite navigation embedded in Director; main navigation in Director.

3a *Quit*

5 The user at all times has the option of quitting the current program. Accordingly, a button "Quit" 3a will be visible in each screen.

Technique: Director; main navigation in Director

4a *Applying directly*

10 "Applying directly" 4a gives the user the possibility of moving himself directly to the room of the company of this choice via a billboard shown on screen 3, listing the names of all participating companies.

Here, he can directly enter into a virtual job interview at the company of his choice.

15 Technique: Director; main navigation in Director.

4b *Participating companies*

20 All participating companies will be represented on the billboard. They will be listed in alphabetical order, so that the owner of the server 4 fully guarantees its objectivity in respect of the participating companies and the user is offered a proper overview.

Technique: Director; main navigation in Director.

4c *Logo of selected company*

25 When a user clicks on the name of a company, the logo of the company in question shoots forward (block 4c). Now, three choices can be made. First of all, there is the option of opening a hyperlink to the company itself by clicking on the company name (block 4e). Secondly, the screen shows: "other company" (block 4d) and "applying" (block 4f).

30 Technique: Flash

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4d Select another company

When the user in 'Applying directly' has chosen a particular company, there appears on screen 3, as already indicated above, the logo of the selected company. Through 'other company', a link to another company can be made.

Technique: Director

4e Hyperlink to website

Hidden behind the logo that appears after a company name has been clicked is a hyperlink to the (recruitment) website of the respective company.

Technique: Director. Director starts browser up with http request. It makes a connection with the server 4.

4f Office of selected company

When the user is in the Central Hall (block 2a) and clicks on 'applying', he goes to the virtual office of the selected company. Here the virtual job interviews (block 7e) are held. The user, standing in front of the office (block 4f), has the possibility of going back to the 'Central Hall' (block 2a), going back to 'applying directly' (block 4a), going to the 'company selection test' (block 6a), or entering the office by clicking on 'go in' (block 4g).

Technique: Director

4g Going in

The user now finds himself in the virtual room of the personnel manager of the company the user has selected. The room is the pivot of the program around which everything turns. Here, the user can conduct a virtual job interview. Also, there are numerous possibilities for the user to

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obtain information about the company in question.

Technique: Director; main navigation in Director.

4h *Going out*

5 When the user is in the virtual room of a company, he always has the option of leaving the room by clicking 'go out'. The user then finds himself in the 'hallway' in front of the office again.

Technique: Director

10 4i *Videoscreen*

The videoscreen contains information which is shown to the user via his computer screen 3 and on which a participating company can present a company profile to the user. On the videoscreen a commercial can be played or an informative film explaining what exactly working within the company
15 in question means.

Technique: Quicktime linear

4j *Information about company*

20 Within the room of a company, the company has numerous possibilities of presenting itself to the user. This is done inter alia by means of a 'whiteboard' animation, where the user can read a text with a company profile, a screen on which the user can open an ICQ option and a bookcase animation from which, for instance, cases, annual reports and other written company information can be retrieved.

25 Technique: Director, Quicktime.

5 *The website of CareerFever*

The entire concept is preferably supported by the website of CareerFever. This website can be reached via the Central Hall (block 2a) of
30 the atrium. On this website the virtual job interviews will also be

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downloadable. This preferably concerns only the application section (blocks 7e-7i). These 'downloadable interviews' are, for instance, graphically less advanced and without sound.

Via the CareerFever website, information carriers, for instance
5 CD-ROMs, with the necessary software and data may then be ordered, for instance free of charge. The software can also be downloaded from the website. The site also offers hyperlinks to the website of all participating companies. Also, the possibility exists for the participating companies to post vacancies on the CareerFever website. As a result, a small vacancy
10 database will arise, aimed exclusively at those having higher qualifications.

Technique: http; on the computer device 2, Director starts up a browser with http request. It makes a connection with the server 4 via the network 27.

15 6a *Company selection test*

When clicking on 'Company selection test' (block 6a), there will first appear a text screen with a short explanation concerning the contents of this test. On the basis of the 'company selection test' the user can find out which of the participating companies in fact satisfy the wishes and
20 requirements he entertains in respect of a prospective employer. The Company selection test matches the wishes and requirements on the part of the user in respect of the possibilities at a prospective employer, with the actual possibilities of the participating companies. In that way, the user can test which of the participating companies best match the wishes he has
25 indicated regarding the possibilities in a prospective job situation, for instance as regards international possibilities, business-to-consumer or business-to-business, solid, tangible products or services, etc. Thereupon he can enter into a virtual job interview with the respective virtual personnel manager.

30 Technique: Director; main navigation in Director.

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6b Avatar selection

With the aid of the avatar selection, the user can determine in what 'outfit' he or she wants to apply. This is an 'infotainment' feature and the choices a user makes here further do not affect the Company selection test, the virtual job interview (blocks 7a-7k) or any one of the other items of the concept of the invention.

Technique: Director; main navigation in Director.

6c Indicating wishes through questions

In the 'Company selection test' the user must answer for instance ten questions all relating to concrete values in a prospective working situation. These are represented as a number of items with short statements in the screen 3. Upon clicking on such an item, a question with regard to this item appears. The user must answer this question through one his input means 13, 15, whereafter he closes the question screen. All the answers given stand for a particular value per item. Prior to the production of the CD-ROMs containing the software and the data, the participating companies have indicated which answers are important to them, along with associated test values. The user must preferably have answered all the questions before running the test.

Technique: Director; main navigation in Director.

6d Weighting factors

After answering the questions, the user can further assign a weighting factor to the answer to the question involved. He does so in the space-like environment by moving the item against the question over the graduated axis towards himself or away from himself.

All items have been 'related' to each other: a user cannot assign a maximum amount of importance to all items. The user has to make concrete

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choices. The participating companies too have indicated these weighting factors. They are also on the information carrier (CD-ROM) as hidden information.

The profiles drawn up in this manner, of the companies on the one hand and the user on the other, can now be compared with each other.

Technique: weighted assessment of interests through algorithm.

6e *Result company selection test*

When the user clicks on a button 'Result', the test runs. This test compares the different profiles of the user and the participating companies. The test algorithm used to do this is identical to the algorithm used in the virtual interview. For the algorithm: see blocks 7e and 7f.

The participating companies which to an equal extent constitute a match with the wishes of the user are displayed on the display 3 in the same concentric circle around the avatar in the center. The companies that meet the user's wishes best, are closest to the avatar and vice versa.

Technique: spatial representation of match between company and applicant.

6f *Company selection*

When the company selection test is run, there appear a number of companies on 2-dimensional axes around the avatar, or the animation (character). The user now has the option of clicking on any one of the companies appearing on screen by name, to obtain information about that company and/or to enter into a virtual interview. The user ends up in front of the office of the selected company, and so in effect goes to block 4f.

Technique: Director.

7a-7k *The job interview*

In flow diagram, the virtual interview is represented with a gray

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background, because this is regarded as the essential part of the invention.

For clarity, hereinbelow, first the blocks 7b and 7c and 7d will be elucidated.

5 7b *Selecting a branch*

When a user clicks on the option 'Job interview', he will end up at the elevator in the middle of the Central Hall (block 2a). The user then looks at a floor indicator, showing the branches of the different participating companies (for instance: 'Consumer Goods'). When the user clicks on such a
10 branch name, he ends up in the elevator, which takes him to the floor where all the rooms of the participating companies from that branch are present.

Technique: Director; main navigation in Director.

15 7c *Elevator to floor*

The block 7c concerns an animation in which the user zooms up in a glass elevator.

Technique: Quicktime animation.

20 7d *Choosing a company*

In the hallway (also an animation) the user can look at the different offices of the companies present on the floor in question. When the user arrives at a company where he wants to go inside to orient himself, or to apply, he clicks on the door or the logo of the virtual room of the company. Then he steps into the room.

25 Technique: Quicktime animation interactive. Main navigation in Director. QuicktimeVR with sprite animation embedded in Director.

7a *Job interview*

The user can enter into a virtual job interview with a virtual personnel
30 manager of a company of his choice (this company must of course

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participate in the concept). This personnel manager sits as an animation character behind a table and poses questions to the user. The animation poses (closed) questions, which are also visible in text on the screen, while the user can answer these questions via the same screen.

- 5 It is very important that this does not concern a standardized list of questions, but that it concerns in actual fact company-specific questions. On the one hand, these have been supplied by the company itself (they may even involve cases) and on the other hand this may concern a list specifically developed for a company, company section or business
- 10 discipline. The questions are tailored to the desires and requirements on the part of the company and will therefore be focused entirely on the competences which prospective employees of the participating companies are to meet.

- Per company, company section or business discipline, a database of, for
- 15 instance, 200 questions is drawn up. In every 'job interview' the user enters into, about 35 questions from the company-specific database are asked, as represented in block 7e.

Technique: weighted random generator retrieves questions from database which is embedded in Director, through list functions.

- 20 The degree of difficulty of these questions can be determined by the participating companies themselves. The greater the ease with which a company succeeds in recruiting candidates, the more difficult it will be to 'pass' the job interview. Preferably, a job interview of a company has a certain degree of difficulty. It should not be too easy to get through the test.

- 25 When the user 'passes' the interview, block 7f, he will be asked if he wants to forward his data, including curriculum vitae (CV) and possibly name/address/residence data and answers to the questions, to the company, company section or business discipline in question, block 7g. If so, the user sends these data (i.e. positive information) via his computer device, as
- 30 indicated with block 7h. The user can then in actual fact leave a guaranteed

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positive impression with the company, company section or business discipline, and possibly skip a first application round (letter of application). The claim of the virtual job interview is therefore that it is a preselection of candidates which the company can make and in the future can replace the letter-based selection such as it is currently still done at many companies. In general, the company will then contact the applicant by electronic route (e.g. via e-mail) or otherwise, block 7i.

If the applicant in block 7e has not 'passed' the virtual job interview, there follows a negative result, block 7j. It will, for instance, be briefly indicated what kind of candidates the company, company section or business discipline is looking for. The candidate is then given an opportunity to try again, possibly after a better preparation or through another medium, block 7k

15 *MATCHING ALGORITHM*

Hereinbelow follows an example of a test algorithm which is used in the Company selection test and the Interview.

Matching takes place at different levels. By way of example, four levels are described here. The starting point is to draw up a profile of the student, and of the company: this can be a company profile, an applicant profile, a vacancy profile or a company preferences profile. A profile is built up from variables, which can take different values and can be subdivided into groups.

Hereinbelow, the general model is described.

It may be that for the application of the matching algorithm in the Company selection test or the Job interview, the group level is omitted. For the working of the principle, however, this does not make any difference.

The levels shown in Fig. 3 are used in an embodiment:

1. Profile level

30 2. Group level

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3. Variable level

4. Value level

Scoring of values:

- 5 • values can only be compared with each other if they belong to the same variable;
- the agreement between a value and a same value is 100%;
- the agreement between a value and another values is derived from the distance matrices:

10

to

	V1	V2	V3	V4
V1	100	30	-	-
V2	20	100	40	-
V3	0	50	-	-
V4	-	-	-	100

from

15

20 Not every value needs to be defined in the matrix. The values lacking are set at 0% agreement unless they are on the diagonal axis (in which case bullet 2 applies).

The gray area in the above table gives a mapping of value 3 on value 2. The agreement is the value in the cell where the 'from' row and the 'to' column intersect. Thus, the agreement in this example is 50%.

25

Scoring of variables:

The score of the variables is calculated by:

- 30 • looking for the best agreement for every value of the 'to' profile;

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- summing these agreements and dividing by the maximum score (100% * number of 'to' values)

Scoring of groups:

5 To every variable, a weight is assigned. The weight is determined by the target profile which is compared with the filled-in profile. To every target profile, by means of a table, an index according to a weighting set has been assigned. The weights are determined in a separate table.

The value for each group is calculated as follows:

- 10
- every variable within the 'to' group is matched with a corresponding variable in the 'from' group in accordance with the preceding calculation. If this variable is not defined in the 'of' group, the agreement is 0%. The score found is multiplied by the weight assigned to the variable;
 - the maximum score is calculated by multiplying every variable in the 'to'
 - 15 group by its weight times 100%;
 - the score found is divided by the maximum score.

Scoring of profiles:

20 In scoring profiles, the intermediate step of the groups is skipped. For the calculation of the profile, the same is done as with the calculation of the individual groups, but now across all variables.

For the actual statistical calculations, reference is made to the annex.

When the profile of the user and that of the company with which the user has conducted an 'interview' agree sufficiently, a text appears, for
25 instance as follows (block 7g)

*"Congratulations! Your answers were a good match with the expectations <<the company>> has in respect of prospective employees. Would you like to go online now and fill out a brief CV (open questions with name/address/residence data, which we, together with the
30 positive data of your interview and with your personal CV attached,*

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will send directly via our database to the recruiters of <<the company>>?"

When the profile of the company and the user do not fit – and so there is no match – a different text appears, for instance as follows (for instance
5 in block 7k)

"Your answers did not yet form a perfect match with the expectations <<the company>> has in respect of prospective employees. It is important to know that <<the company>> is looking for ... (fillable) who ... (fillable)."

10 It is very important here that the candidate is not rejected. During the 'interview', the candidate does **not** have to be **online**, so that if he is rejected the company of his choice will never find out.

In addition, also the 'game' format is unique: the user does not need to fill in anything (or almost nothing) himself and yet can give away sufficient
15 details of himself to skip a round with a company.

7g Forwarding CV

A web page appears, which runs on the secure server 4 and on which the user can fill in name/address/residence details.

20 Technique: Http request to server 4.

The application form is then filled in and sent in. The user receives a message in return, saying that he can attach his name/address/residence details, the answers to the questions that gave a positive result, and his own CV and send same to the server 4.

25

7h and 7i

The server 4 takes care that the company where the user has applied (and that company alone), receives the user data.

For that matter, the user can also himself print out the answers he has
30 given to the questions and is forwarding, in accordance with the Dutch

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application code.

The company receives a message via an e-mail that there are CVs of candidates on the part of the server 4 reserved for the company in question, and the company can proceed to view/retrieve them through an access code.

5 Thereupon the personnel manager of the company looks online at the application form, the CV and the test results of the candidates who have conducted a virtual interview at the company in question.

Then the company contacts the applicant via the e-mail, or via other media, for an interview.

10

Summary of features

Hereinbelow the most specific features of the invention will be briefly enumerated.

Most known concepts that approximate the concept of the invention to
15 some extent are in the sphere of the 'jobsites'. The processes there mostly proceed as follows: storing candidate information → finding match with the job description → forwarding to company, which evaluates candidate. In the invention, the process proceeds almost 'the other way around': storing company information → does the job seeker find the company interesting?
20 → virtual job interview → match? → company invites job seeker.

In other concepts, the starting point is that candidates fill out 'standard forms' which are offered by an intermediary, which forms are subsequently matched with a description of a specific job or function. The concept of the invention, however, involves answering really 'company-
25 specific' questions, which have been drawn up per company, for instance by employees of the company itself. Accordingly, a candidate only gives away information the company actually finds of interest.

The form in which the information is obtained from the job seeker is the form of a game: he really seems to be conducting an interview with a
30 personnel manager of the company of his choice.

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Unduly long forms to be filled out are avoided. Also, the job seeker will have the opportunity of sending his own CV (which, in most cases, he already has stored in his PC) as an attachment.

The job seeker sends his information only to the company of his choice.

5 The information with which the answers of the job seeker are matched in the 'virtual interview' concern the competences and values which the company is looking for in general, or, for instance, for a particular operating company or department. What is not involved, however, are requirements for a specific position or vacancy. The invention is about the possibilities for
10 a career in the participating companies, company sections or business disciplines.

When a job seeker successfully completes the virtual interview, he is personally invited by the company in question for a first interview. The concept is a substitute for the first application (letter) round.

15 When it appears from the virtual interview that the answers of the job seeker did not form a match with the answers desired by the company, these data do not find their way to the company. Thus, the job seeker can elect to try again or to approach the company through another channel. In letter rounds and existing concepts, a job seeker's chances with a company
20 are mostly reduced to zero after a single failure.

Also, a virtual job interview can be entered into, purely for the sake of orientation, without further consequences.

The selection of the job seeker is done before he has forwarded his name/address/residence details and does not necessarily take place online.

25 The selection in the virtual interview is done by means of 200 company-specific questions, of which at random 30 to 35 are posed to the applicant.

The participating companies receive the job seeker's answers to the questions only if it has appeared that the match in the 'interview' was good.
30 Accordingly, companies only get positive candidate information. In that

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way, large numbers of job seekers can apply at the same time, while the test behind the 'interview' selects the right candidates.

The degree of difficulty of a virtual interview can be determined per department, per company.

5 The concept offers the job seeker the possibility, before entering the selection, of first orienting himself extensively on the company (a few examples of presentations in the room: hyperlinks to the website, an annual report and/or case studies in a 'bookcase', a 'whiteboard' with company information, or a company film on a 'videocscreen').

10 In addition to information about training, etc, which can mostly be derived also from a letter, the job seeker can also be tested for analytical, psychological and, for instance, social skills, so that the company receives more information about the job seeker than in a letter round.

15 What is not involved here is a vacancy bank, where vacancies are matched with profiles and qualifications of job seekers. Nor is the job seeker offered any vacancies, but he is offered companies.

20 There is no matching on keywords in a candidate profile, but on the answers the job seeker gives to the company-specific questions. These are matched with the answers a company wishes to receive, taking into account the weighting factors the company has coupled to questions.

The questions, being company-specific, can offer a company a means of presentation, in the virtual interview, to indicate what kind of people they are looking for and what kind of qualifications and/or knowledge and/or values and/or skills and/or competences they find important.

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ANNEX

(Pseudo Z) Specification of the PROFILE Matching:

5

PROFILE <i>Id</i> :N <i>SVar</i> : <i>SharedVar</i>
--

10 $\forall x, y : HBKValue \bullet (x \neq y \rightarrow x.Id \neq y.Id)$

15

PROFILESha <i>Id</i> :N <i>DistanceMatrix</i> : <i>HbkiValue</i> \times <i>HBK.Value</i> \rightarrow N <i>GroupId</i> :N <i>Weight</i> :N
--

$\forall x, y, n \bullet DistanceMatrix(x, y, n) \leftrightarrow (x.VarId = y.VarId = Id \wedge 0 \leq n \leq 100)$
DistanceMatrix(*x*, *x*, 100)

20 $\forall x, y : HBKSharedVar \bullet (x \neq y \rightarrow x.Id \neq y.Id)$

25

PROFI <i>Values</i> : <i>PHbkValue</i> <i>SVar</i> : <i>SharedVar</i>
--

$\forall x \in Values \bullet (x.SVar = SVar)$

30

PROFIELGr <i>Id</i> :N <i>Variables</i> : <i>PHbkVar</i>

$\forall x, y \in Variables \bullet (x \neq y \rightarrow x.Id \neq y.Id)$

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$$\begin{array}{|l} \text{PROFILE} \\ \hline \text{Groups:PHbkGroup} \\ \hline \forall x, y \in \text{Groups} \bullet (x \neq y \rightarrow x.Id \neq y.Id) \end{array}$$

5

Distance between two values:

$$\text{Match}(x, y : \text{HBKValue}) = \{x.SVar.DistanceMatrix(x, y)\}$$

10

Matching two PROFILEValues that do not belong to the same PROFILESharedVar is not possible. This will lead to the PROFILESharedVar invariant being exceeded (outcome undefined).

Because the variables of x and y are equal at this level, the weight thereof does not need to be included in the calculation.

15

In the concept of the invention, this match is not explicitly calculated/shown.

Distance between two variables:

$$\text{Match}(x, y : \text{HBKVar}) =$$

$$= \{0\} \oplus \left\{ (x.SVar = y.SVar) \rightarrow \frac{\sum_{w_1 \in x.Values} \max(\{w_2 \in y \bullet \text{Match}(w_1, w_2)\})}{\#x.Values} \right\}$$

20

This function yields zero if x and y are not comparable. Matching two variables that do not belong to the same group does not occur within the system. However, there is no line excluding this.

Again, the weight with which the variables are weighted is not relevant, because this time the result is always zero if the variables differ from each other ($n \neq 0 \Rightarrow 0$)

25

Distance between two groups:

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$$\text{Match}(x, y : \text{HBKGroup}) =$$

$$= \{0\} \oplus \left\{ (x.Id = y.Id) \rightarrow \frac{\sum_{v_1 \in x.Variabes} \{v_2 \in y \bullet \text{Match}(v_1, v_2) * v_1.SVar.Weight\}}{\sum_{v_1 \in x.Variabes} v_1.SVar.Weight} \right\}$$

5 This time, the weight of the variable is included, since a match is now being performed across several variables, which may be mutually different in weight.

A match between two groups which cannot be compared with each other, yields zero.

Distance between two profiles:

$$\text{Match}(x, y : \text{HBK Profile}) =$$

$$= \{0\} \oplus \left\{ \frac{\sum_{g_1 \in x.Groups} \left\{ g_2 \in y \bullet \left(\sum_{v_1 \in g_1.Variabes} \{v_2 \in g_2 \bullet \text{Match}(v_1, v_2) * v_1.SVar.Weight\} \right) \right\}}{\sum_{g_1 \in x.Groups} \left(\sum_{v_1 \in g_1} v_1.SVar.Weight \right)} \right\}$$

10 In the match between two profiles, no use can be made of the match between two groups, because in this formula the result is divided back to percentages too early.

15 The match function for profiles is therefore identical to that of groups (albeit at a higher aggregation level).

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CLAIMS

1. An apparatus for supporting an application with a company, comprising at least one processor, at least one memory, input means for inputting information by a user and display means for showing information to the user, the apparatus being arranged for performing the following steps:

- having the user select a company from a list of predetermined companies;
- selecting a predetermined number of questions from a list of career-oriented questions especially developed for that company;
- presenting the selected career-oriented questions to the user;
- receiving answers of the user to the career-oriented questions;
- determining whether the user fits in with a career associated with the company, and
 - ♦ if so, sending personal data of the user to the company, provided the user has given permission to do so;
 - ♦ if not, reporting to the user that he/she does not fit in with a career associated with that company.

2. An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the apparatus is arranged, in presenting the career-oriented questions, to display an office space with a person, with whom a virtual interview can be conducted.

3. An apparatus according to claim 1 or 2, wherein the apparatus prior to the selection of a company, presents a company selection test to the user, in which the apparatus compares wishes and requirements in respect of a career as received from the user with company profiles of a number of companies and determines which of the company profiles fits the wishes and requirements of the user best.

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4. An apparatus according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the apparatus can receive per company a first set of weighting factors per career-oriented question and can have same included in weighting when determining whether the user fits in with any one of the careers associated with the company.

5. An apparatus according to claim 3, wherein each company selection test comprises several items and the apparatus of the user can receive a second set of weighting factors per item of the company selection test and can have same included in weighting when determining which of the company profiles fits the wishes and requirements of the user best.

6. An apparatus according to claim 3 or 5, wherein each company selection test comprises several items and the apparatus can receive per company a third set of weighting factors per item of the company selection test and can have same included in weighting when determining which of the company profiles fits the wishes and requirements of the user best.

7. An apparatus according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the apparatus is arranged for showing to the user, prior to the presentation of the career-oriented questions, a representation of a central hall of an office building with hyperlinks to websites of the predetermined companies.

8. A method for supporting an application with a company via an apparatus comprising at least one processor, at least one memory, input means for inputting information by a user and display means for showing information to the user, the method comprising the following steps:

- having the user select a company from a list of predetermined companies;
- selecting a predetermined number of questions from a list of career-oriented questions especially developed for that company;

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- presenting the selected career-oriented questions to the user;
 - receiving answers of the user to the career-oriented questions;
 - determining whether the user fits in with a career associated with the company, and
- 5 ♦ if so, sending personal data of the user to the company, provided the user has given permission to do so;
- ♦ if not, reporting to the user that he/she does not fit in with a career associated with that company.

- 10 9. A computer program product for supporting an application with a company and which can be read by a computer apparatus comprising at least one processor, at least one memory, input means for inputting information by a user and display means for showing information to the user, the apparatus being arranged for performing the following steps after
- 15 the computer program product has been read:
- having the user select a company from a list of predetermined companies;
 - selecting a predetermined number of questions from a list of career-oriented questions especially developed for that company;
 - presenting the selected career-oriented questions to the user;
 - 20 • receiving answers of the user to the career-oriented questions;
 - determining whether the user fits in with a career associated with the company, and
- ♦ if so, sending personal data of the user to the company, provided the user has given permission to do so;
- 25 ♦ if not, reporting to the user that he/she does not fit in with a career associated with that company.

10. - A data carrier provided with a computer program product according to claim 9.

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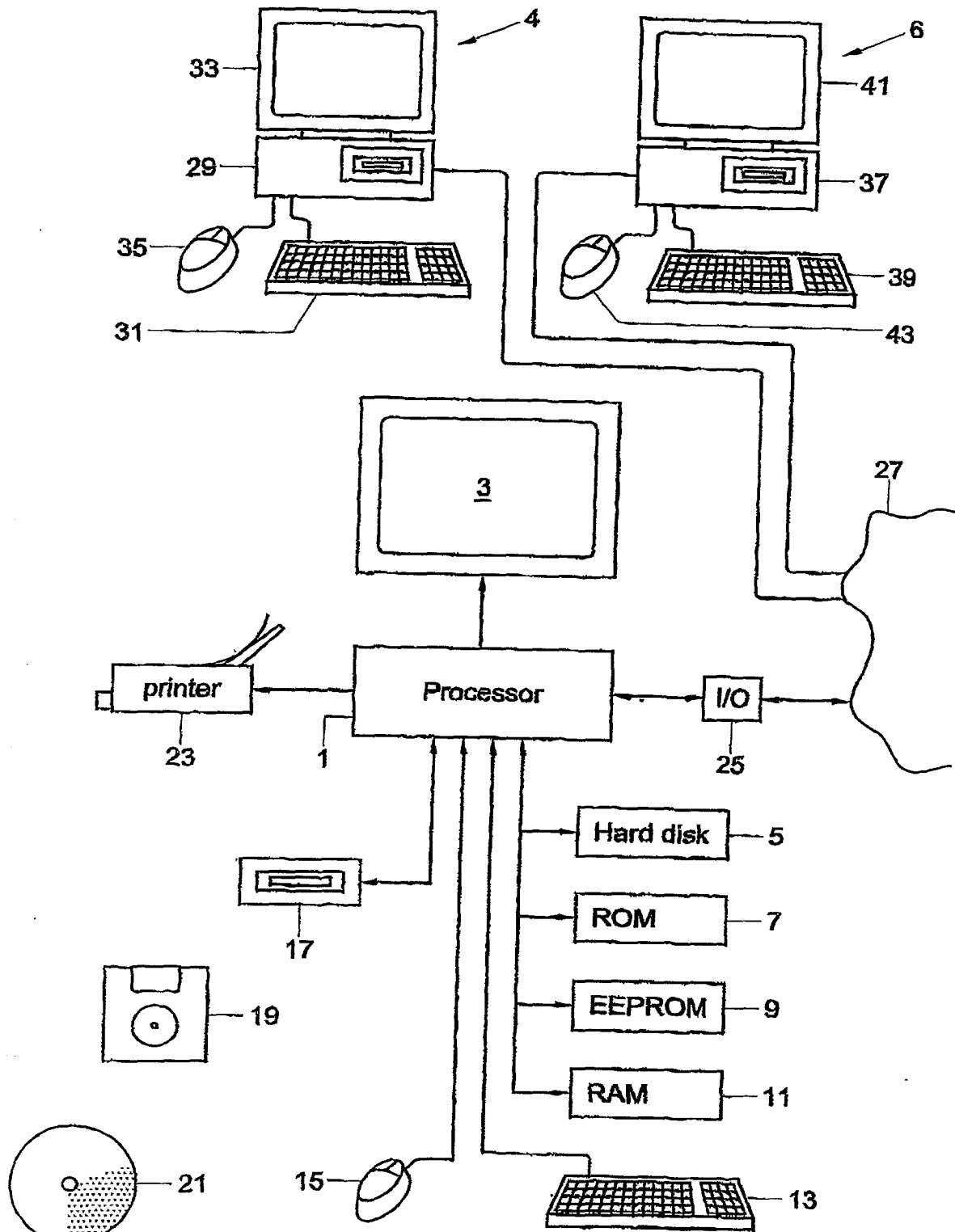


Fig. 1

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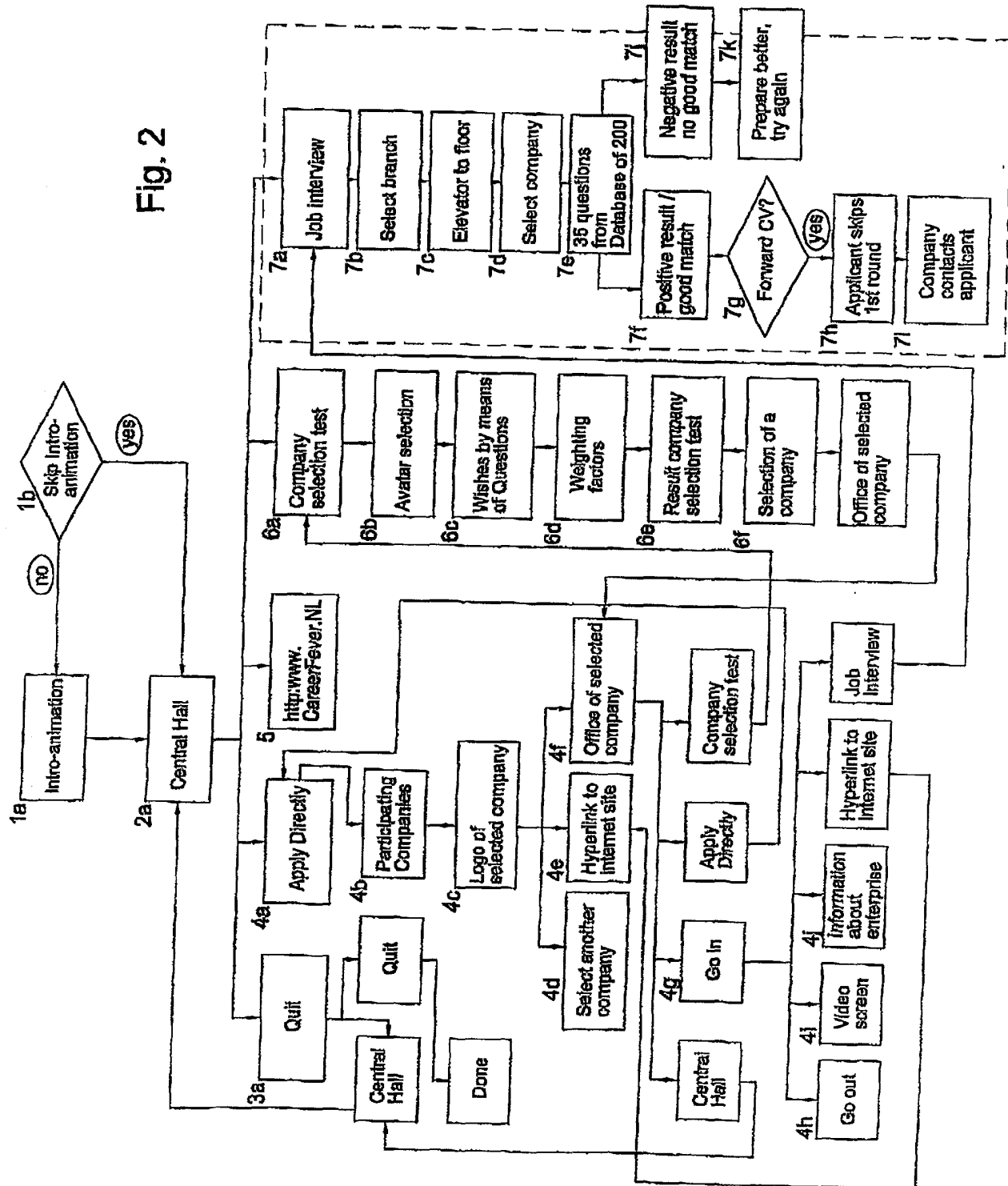
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Fig. 2



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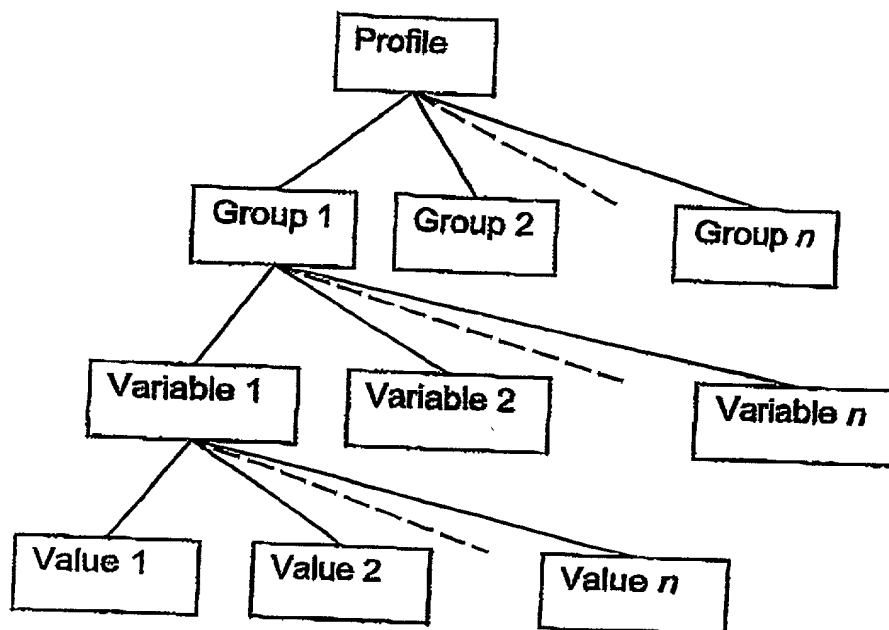


Fig. 3

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**Declaration and Power of Attorney Patent Application
(Design or Utility)**

As a below named inventor, I hereby declare that:

My residence, post office address and citizenship are as stated below next to my name,

I believe I am the original, first and sole inventor (if only one name is listed below) or an original, first and joint inventor (if plural names are listed below) of the subject matter which is claimed and for which a patent is sought on the invention entitled: 'Method and apparatus for supporting an application procedure'

the specification of which

- ☐ is attached hereto
X was filed on February 13, 2002 as application serial no. 10/049,585
and or PCT International Application number PCT/NL00/00419 and was amended
on (if applicable).

I hereby state that I have reviewed and understand the contents of the above-identified specification, including the claims, as amended by any amendment referred to above.

I acknowledge the duty to disclose to the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office all information know to me to be material to patentability as defined in 37 C.F.R. §1.56.

I hereby claim foreign priority benefits under 35 U.S.C. §119(a)-(d) or 35 U.S.C. §365(b) of any foreign application(s) for patent or inventor's certificate, or 35 U.S.C. §365(a) of any PCT International application which designated at least one country other than the United States, listed below and have also identified below any foreign application for patent or inventor's certificate of PCT International application having a filing date before that of the application on which priority is claimed.

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Number	Country	Day/Month/Year Filed
Number	Country	Day/Month/Year Filed
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Serial Number	Day/Month/Year Filed	Status (patented, pending, abandoned)
Serial Number	Day/Month/Year Filed	Status (patented, pending, abandoned)
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I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements are made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under 18 U.S.C. §1001 and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon.

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Power of Attorney

As a named inventor, I hereby appoint the following attorney(s) and/or agent(s) to prosecute this application and transact all business in the Patent and Trademark Office connected therewith.

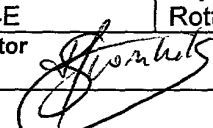
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(8)

I hereby authorize them or others whom they may appoint to act and rely on instructions from and communicate directly with the person/organization who/which first sends this case to them and by whom/which I hereby declare that I have consented after full disclosure to be represented unless/until I instructed otherwise.

Please direct all correspondence in this case to at the address indicated below:

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